

HCS #2 HBs 48, 69, 495, & 589 -- PUBLIC SAFETY SALES TAX

SPONSOR: Lichtenegger

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS #2" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 13 to 0.

This bill adds certain cities to the list of cities authorized to impose, upon voter approval, a retail sales tax of up to 0.5% for improving public safety including compensation, pension programs, health care, and additional equipment and facilities for police, fire, and emergency medical providers (Sections 94.900, 94.902, and 94.903, RSMo).

The additional cities include Peculiar, Lamar, Salem, St. Clair, Higginsville, Lexington, Mount Vernon, Eldon, Platte City, Rock Hill, and Mountain Grove, (Section 94.900.1(1)(b)); Jackson, Republic, and Lake St. Louis, (Section 94.900.1(1)(f)); Carl Junction, Sullivan, Pacific, Oak Grove, Dexter, and Warrenton, (Section 94.900.1(1)(g)); and Eureka, Harrisonville, Union, Bolivar, Branson, and Troy (Section 94.902.1(6))

In certain of the additional cities, the sales tax will expire in 10 years unless approved again by the voters, and if the sales tax fails on the first ballot, the cities cannot put the issue on the ballot again without new statutory authorization. The cities to which the 10 year duration and the one-time vote opportunity applies include Peculiar, Lamar, Salem, St. Clair, Higginsville, Lexington, Mount Vernon, Eldon, Platte City, Rock Hill, and Mountain Grove (Section 94.900.1(1)(b)).

In certain of the additional cities, regardless of when the tax is imposed, it will expire on December 31, 2038. The specific tax expiration date provision currently applies to the cities of Eureka, Harrisonville, Union, Bolivar, Branson, and Troy.

In certain of the additional cities, the sales tax will expire in 15 years, and then every 10 years thereafter, unless approved again by the voters. If the sales tax fails on the first ballot, those cities cannot put the issue on the ballot again for at least 12 months. If the sales tax fails on a second ballot, then the authorization for the sales tax for those cities is repealed. Currently, this provision only applies to the cities of Branson, Eureka, Harrisonville, Union, Bolivar, and Troy (Section 94.903).

The bill also adds certain fire protection districts to the list of fire protection districts authorized to impose, upon voter

approval, a sales tax not to exceed 0.5% for the purpose of providing revenues for the operation of the fire protection district. The additional fire protection districts currently include those located in Ripley and Mississippi counties (Section 321.246).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the additional revenue is greatly needed, mostly to allow the municipality to provide competitive salaries for public safety personnel, to update equipment, and to hire additional personnel.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Lichtenegger.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.